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# NIACOG

## NEWS

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### **Jumpstart Housing Assistance - Status Report**

The Jumpstart program was kicked off last October to assist flood victims, both housing and businesses, with recovering from the impacts of the storms (primarily flooding of 2008). Since that time, and much *water under the bridge*, the program has gone through several changes, adding programs and components from both state and federal funding sources.

To date, NIACOG has assisted 189 households with flood repair, down payment assistance, and/or interim mortgage assistance. All of the projects have been funded with **state** dollars. Because of the limited regulatory requirements of state funding, the State program has been able to *quickly* address flood recovery issues including home repair, down payment assistance, and interim mortgage assistance.

Federal funding was added to the Jumpstart program late in 2008 and brought with it considerable funds (millions of dollars for our region) and full rehabilitation of homes, rather than just flood damage repairs, down payment assistance, or Interim Mortgage Assistance. Unfortunately, it is also much more cumbersome in terms of paper work and program requirements, but certainly critical in terms of assisting all of the applicants. We have received 80 applications to date. Their current status is as follows: 1 has been fully funded and closed out; 24 are being processed as federal applications, 37 applications are incomplete for documentation, 18 were determined ineligible with 12 of them sent to the state program for funding.

We will likely be under construction on several projects within the next month. All applications are now made to this federal program; if ineligible for federal funding, they are shifted to the state program for assistance. The federal program has no deadline for application and is available (along with the checklist) at the following address: [http://www.iowalifechanging.com/jumpstart/jumpstart\\_iowa.aspx](http://www.iowalifechanging.com/jumpstart/jumpstart_iowa.aspx). A link to the site is also posted on our website at [www.niacog.org](http://www.niacog.org).

A second pool of state funds, also known as State 2<sup>nd</sup> Round, was also released and is available solely to projects that are determined ineligible for federal funds. In our region, this state program is funding full rehabilitation of homes for applicants under 100% of median income, but is restricted to flood repair for households with incomes over 100% of median income. To participate in the program households must have incomes less than 150% of the area's median income. The deadline for this program is September 1, 2009.

The State's 3<sup>rd</sup> Round of funding was recently approved by the Legislature and signed by the Governor under Senate File 376 bill. The administrative rules for this program are not

completed yet, and the funding will not be available until after July 1, 2009. The intent of the program, however, is to assist applicants who are ineligible for the other programs.

A final Jumpstart Housing Assistance Program area we are now just beginning to process applications for are the 40 rental housing sites for which assistance has been requested; 39 sites (79 apartment units) fall under the 'small rental' program of 7 or fewer units and 1 falls under the large rental (over 7 units). To be eligible for the rental assistance program in our region, the rental building must have sustained \$500 of damage due to the storms of 2008. Although the IDED created an initial deadline to learn the level of need for rental housing assistance, the program is still open for additional applications.

For more information about the Jumpstart Housing Assistance Programs contact Myrtle Nelson at 641-423-0491 ext. 16 or [mnelson@niacog.org](mailto:mnelson@niacog.org).

### **Interim Mortgage Assistance Program Extended**

The State of Iowa has agreed to extend interim mortgage assistance to disaster-impacted Iowans. This applies to homeowners who are currently receiving the assistance through the Jumpstart Iowa Housing Assistance Program.

Interim mortgage assistance was first made available to Iowans impacted by the 2008 floods and storms in September, when the Jumpstart Iowa Housing Assistance Program was first made public. Under the assistance program, Iowans whose principal residence was on the list of properties being considered for a "buy-out" could receive up to \$1,000 a month in mortgage assistance for up to 12 months (depending on whether the applicant received state or federal assistance).

The Jumpstart Housing Program rules were amended allowing homeowners to receive up to an additional six months of interim mortgage assistance for applicants already receiving funding if the homeowner remains displaced from the disaster affected property.

The Interim Mortgage Assistance program was developed to take away the burden of two mortgages, leaving the impacted homeowner with responsibility for only the mortgage of the new home. The assistance may be used for payment of principal, interest, property taxes and hazard insurance. Homeowners currently receiving Interim Mortgage Assistance need to contact the NIACOG office to officially request an extension of the program funding.

## Director's Notes



I'm certain no reminder is necessary, but June marks the one-year anniversary of the worst disaster in the State's history. To commemorate the one year anniversary, Mason City will be hosting a community picnic and program on June 7th. NIACOG staff will be present manning 'resource booths' during the commemoration event to answer questions about Iowa's recovery and available assistance programs along with other local, state and federal agencies.

Staff continues to work diligently throughout the region to meet the needs of property owners impacted by the disaster. It has been a long and arduous task, but we are making real progress. If there are unmet needs of your residents, city or county infrastructure, there are funds available to help. Please do not hesitate to contact our office if we can be of assistance.

## Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) River Enhancement Community Attraction and Tourism (RECAT)

The application deadline is fast approaching for the next CAT/RECAT program through the Iowa Department of Economic Development. The deadline is July 15<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested on making an application for this deadline or a future deadline there is a workshop on June 25<sup>th</sup> for the CAT/RECAT Technical Assistance workshop. This session is free of charge and will be held in the Main Conference Room at the Iowa Department of Economic Development located at 200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines. Space is limited. RSVP by Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, to [alaina.santizo@iowalifechanging.com](mailto:alaina.santizo@iowalifechanging.com) or 515.242.4827.

The Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Program supports projects that promote recreational, cultural, educational or entertainment attractions that are available to the general public in your community, i.e. community centers, pools, museums, etc. There is no minimum or maximum award amount. Funding for the CAT program is through an appropriation by the Iowa legislature. The CAT program receives \$12 million annually through fiscal year 2013.

The River Enhancement Community Attraction and Tourism (RECAT) Program supports projects that promote and enhance recreational opportunities on and near rivers or lakes within cities, i.e. river trails, canoe launches, etc.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities please contact the NIACOG offices.

## Business Rental Assistance

NIACOG has a new program to assist businesses affected by the 2008 disasters. The Iowa Department of Economic Development will provide financial assistance to eligible businesses located in, or planning to locate in, a business rental space that was physically damaged by the 2008 natural disasters. Assistance will be in the form of rental assistance to help offset building rental lease payments for a maximum of six months, not to exceed a total award amount of \$50,000. In-home businesses are not eligible for the funds through this program. The award will be a forgivable loan to a business that has entered into a minimum one year market rate lease agreement and if the business remains open for the duration of the six month time period, for which rental assistance is awarded, the loan will be forgiven. Applications are available at our office or

[www.iowalifechanging.com/jumpstart/business\\_rental.html](http://www.iowalifechanging.com/jumpstart/business_rental.html).

## Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

There are Hazard Mitigation Plans in the region that are about to become non-compliant based on the 5 year update rule. These plans were completed and approved in 2005. Cities need to start putting together a review committee or review chairperson to review changes that need to be made to their plan. If you are unsure as to the date of approval of your plan please contact NIACOG. As required by FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plans need to be updated every five years. The plan is reviewed and changes are made to the plan (i.e. completed projects, projects that have started but not finished, projects not completed, new hazards identified, etc.) and then resubmitted for FEMA approval. The plan should have review sheets in the back of the plan for your guidance. If you do not have these review sheets please contact Dan Schroeder at the NIACOG office for assistance.

## State Recreational Trail Applications Being Accepted

The Iowa Department of Transportation will be accepting State Recreational Trail (SRT) program applications for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2010 funding. In this application cycle, approximately \$3,250,000 will be available for the development of trails and trail-related amenities. This funding consists of \$2,250,000 from the SFY 2010 appropriation and approximately \$1,000,000 from funding reverted back from previously awarded projects. Applications must be postmarked or received by the Office of Systems Planning by July 1, 2009. IDOT would like to encourage entities that had trails damaged by flooding last year to submit applications for SRT funding to match the FEMA funding received to restore these trails.

This program is highly competitive and funding is limited. You can access the following website for the application form and program guidelines: [http://www.sysplan.dot.state.ia.us/fedstate\\_rectrails.htm](http://www.sysplan.dot.state.ia.us/fedstate_rectrails.htm) or contact the NIACOG office to discuss your potential application.

## Transportation Stimulus

Continuing with the two previous newsletters, the following is an update regarding the over \$5.5 million in transportation stimulus dollars, received by the Regional Planning Affiliation 2 that was programmed in February. As most of you know the stimulus bill is officially titled the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, or ARRA . The bid status of the approved ARRA projects is as follows:

County	Project	Estimated Total Project Cost	Approved Funding	Bid Amount	Difference from Estimate
Cerro Gordo	B30	\$850,000	\$850,000	\$1,037,107.31	(\$187,107.31)
Floyd	B60	\$1,300,000	\$1,175,115	\$1,164,011.97	\$135,988.03
Franklin	S56	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$229,453.89	\$70,546.11
Hancock	B-20	\$385,000	\$385,000	\$388,597.96	(\$3,597.96)
Kossuth	R-14	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	Not Yet Let	
Mitchell	470th St	\$500,000	\$400,000	\$477,655.84	(\$22,344.16)
Winnebago	R-60	\$475,000	\$475,000	\$538,915.17	(\$63,915.17)
Worth	Bridge	\$125,000	\$125,000	Not Yet Let	
	Bridge	\$125,000	\$125,000	Not Yet Let	
Region 2 Transit	3 busses	\$190,200	\$190,200	\$190,200.00	\$0.00
TOTAL		\$5,650,200	\$5,525,315	\$4,025,942.14	(\$25,742.14)

As you can see, many of the projects were bid favorably. For those where the bids did come in over the estimate, it may be possible to utilize funds from projects that came in under the estimate.

## Supplemental CDBG Disaster Recovery Infrastructure Funding

NIACOG staff has been busy working with several communities in the Region to complete CDBG Supplemental applications in hopes of accessing funds to resolve disaster related infrastructure issues. Projects range from storm sewer and drainage improvements to jetting and cleaning of sanitary sewer lines. According to the IDED press release, the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED) received an additional \$32 million for disaster-related infrastructure projects on top of the original approximate \$16 million already received through Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funding. Key components of the program are that the maximum request is \$5 million per project; projects must address a need arising from the 2008 disaster, serve as the best alternative to address the need and meet a national objective under the CDBG program. If a project does not meet the national objective of primarily benefiting persons of low and moderate income, it could potentially meet the national objective of meeting an urgent need in a community.

There is no deadline for submitting an application, however, project applications will be reviewed as they are received. If you think you may have an eligible project, please contact the NIACOG office.

## Mason City Hosts Commemoration Event

The theme for Mason City's event is "River City Rises, Recovers & Remembers." Flooding in Mason City last June inundated more than 1,100 homes and caused the city's water system to be shut down for more than a week. Many volunteers and emergency workers assisted with the rescue and recovery efforts. The disaster will be marked by a program and community picnic at East Park on June 7, 2009.

The picnic runs from noon to 4 p.m. Lt. Gen. Ron Dardis, Executive Director of the Rebuild Iowa Office, will deliver comments about last summer's disaster and recovery efforts during the program which begins at 1 p.m. at the East Park Band Shell. The rain location will be at Music Man Square.

## NIACOG Awarded EDA Funds

The US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration recently notified NIACOG of a \$64,840 grant award for continuation of the agency's economic development planning program and the implementation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) for the region.



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**NIACOG Calendar of Events**

**JUNE**

- 7- River City Rises, Recover and Remembers noon to 4 @ East Park, Mason City
- 8- NIACOG Executive Committee @ NIACOG noon
- 19- City Clerks Association @ NIACOG 9:30 am
- 19- Elected Officials Symposium @ NIACC Muse Norris Conference Center, 8:00 am - 1:00 p.m.

**JULY**

- 3- NIACOG Office closed for Independence Day holiday
- 8- Haz Mat Mtg / Open House @ MCFD 1:30 p.m.
- 13- NIACOG Board of Directors Mtg @ Ridgestone Golf Club, Sheffield 6:00 p.m.

**Area Projects Awarded CDBG funds**

Congratulations to the City of Stacyville and the City of St. Ansgar on behalf of the Wee Saints Daycare on their recent awards of CDBG funds.

The City of Stacyville submitted an application to replace or rehabilitate sewer lines and manholes. The City is experiencing excessive Inflow and Infiltration which could cause them to exceed the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit. Stacyville's project is estimated to cost \$983,000. The City requested and was awarded \$300,000.

The City of St. Ansgar applied on behalf of the Wee Saints Daycare Center for an expansion project to serve an additional 20 children. St. Ansgar has seen recent growth in the number of jobs and the number of new families in the community. St. Ansgar's project is estimated to cost \$420,000. They requested and were awarded \$200,000.

**NIACOG STAFF**  
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